Pakistan's challenge to India's claim on Super Basmati Rice

1644. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

whether it is a fact that Pakistan has challenged India's claim on Super Basmati Rice;

if so, what is the legal position at this juncture and what are the threats to India's rice production from Pakistan; and

whether there is a strategy to work jointly with Pakistan on these issues in dealing with European Union and other Western countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. The Rice Exporter Association of Pakistan through a legal notice sent to the Department of Commerce in September, 2007 *vide* their Indian Lawyer have claimed that India has indulged in "passing off action" by notifying Super Basmati rice variety for export purpose. The reply contesting their claim has already been sent through our lawyers. Since then there has been no further feedback from the Pakistani side on this matter. There does not appear to be any threat to India's Rice production from Pakistan.

(c) The Government of India has expressed willingness to discuss with Pakistan the possibilities of joint registration of Basmati Rice as a Geographical Indication (GI), which will help both the countries to protect Basmati name against illegal infringements by third countries.

Growth rate of industrial production and exports

†1645. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANL

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

whether Government has assessed the annual growth rate of industrial production in the country and annual growth rate of exports;

if so, the growth rate of industrial production and export from the year 2004-05 to 2006-07, year-wise; and

the annual growth rates of export of agricultural products during the above years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL POLICY AND PROMOTION, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY(SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The industrial growth, export growth, and the growth rate of export of agriculture and allied products during 2004-05,2005-06, and 2006-07 are given below:

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.